

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

JAN 31 2008

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A creep drive control device that ~~executes~~ configured to execute, when a driver of a vehicle does not have either one of an intention to accelerate the vehicle and an intention to maintain stopping of the vehicle, at least one of adjustment of a braking force and adjustment of a driving force applied to the vehicle so as to execute a low-speed control such that a vehicle speed becomes a value within a fixed range, ~~an upper limit of which is~~ range with an upper limit of 10 km/h, and such that the speed of the vehicle becomes a predetermined target speed, wherein

the target speed is calculated in accordance with a driving operation of the driver during the low-speed control, and wherein

there is a relationship between the target speed and a degree of brake pedal depression such that the greater the degree of brake pedal depression is, the smaller the target speed ~~is~~ is, and the target speed is continuously calculated in accordance with the driving operation.

2. (Currently amended) A creep drive control device comprising:

an engine output control unit that ~~controls~~ configured to control an engine output in accordance with an engine control amount;

a braking force control unit that ~~controls~~ is configured to control a braking force applied to each wheel in accordance with a brake control amount;

an acceleration intention determination unit that ~~determines~~ configured to determine whether a driver has an acceleration intention;

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

a stop maintenance intention determination unit ~~that determines~~configured to determine whether the driver has a stop maintenance intention;

a target creep speed setting unit ~~that sets~~configured to set a target creep speed, wherein the target creep speed is calculated in accordance with a driving operation of the driver during a low-speed control;

a vehicle speed acceleration unit ~~that increases~~configured to set a vehicle speed by at least one of increasing the engine output and decreasing the braking force;

a vehicle speed deceleration unit ~~that decreases~~configured to decrease a vehicle speed by at least one of decreasing the engine output and increasing the braking force;

a starting assistance control unit which, when a result of a determination by the acceleration intention determination unit and a result of a determination by the stop maintenance intention determination unit are negative, ~~operates~~configured to operate using a creep driving mode in which the following occurs:

the vehicle speed acceleration unit is operated when the vehicle speed is less than a first target vehicle speed, and the first target vehicle speed is smaller than the target creep speed; and

the vehicle speed deceleration unit is operated when the vehicle speed is larger than a second target vehicle speed, and the second target vehicle speed is larger than the target creep speed, and

the target creep speed is continuously calculated in accordance with the driving operation.

3. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the acceleration intention determination unit ~~determines~~is configured to determine that the driver

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

has the acceleration intention when a shift position of an automatic transmission is set to a drive operable position by the driver, and when the acceleration intention determination unit ~~detects~~ is configured to detect at least one of an accelerator opening being equal to a predetermined amount, the vehicle speed being equal to or above a predetermined value, and the drive of the vehicle being controlled by an automatic driving control other than the control executed by the starting assistance control unit.

4. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the stop maintenance determination unit ~~determines~~ is configured to determine that the driver has the stop maintenance intention when the stop maintenance determination unit detects at least one of setting of a shift position of an automatic transmission to a drive inoperable position by the driver, execution of a brake operation that generates braking force capable of causing stop maintenance of the vehicle, and execution of an automatic stop control that automatically stops the vehicle.

5. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the target creep speed setting unit ~~sets~~ is configured to set the target creep speed by correcting a pre-set reference creep speed in accordance with at least one of a driving state of the vehicle and a road surface condition.

6. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 5, wherein the target creep speed setting unit ~~executes~~ is configured to execute correction such that the target creep speed becomes larger as an accelerator opening becomes larger.

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

7. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 5, wherein the target creep speed setting unit executes-is configured to execute a correction such that the target creep speed becomes smaller as a brake operation amount becomes larger.

8. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 5, wherein the target creep speed setting unit executes-is configured to execute a correction such that the target creep speed when the vehicle is moving in a backward direction is smaller than the target creep speed when the vehicle is moving in a forward direction.

9. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 5, wherein the target creep speed setting unit executes-is configured to execute a correction such that the target creep speed becomes smaller as a distance becomes smaller between the vehicle and an obstacle in a forward direction of the vehicle.

10. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 5, wherein the target creep speed setting unit executes-is configured to execute a correction such that the target creep speed becomes larger on a road with a downward gradient, and the target creep speed becomes smaller on a road with an upward gradient.

11. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 5, wherein the target creep speed setting unit executes-is configured to execute a correction such that the target

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

creep speed becomes larger in accordance with a length of continuation of a state in which the braking force generated by the braking force control unit is equal to or above a predetermined value.

12. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the target creep speed setting unit sets is configured to set, when a deviation between a present vehicle speed and the target creep speed is larger than a predetermined value, a new target creep speed that is the sum of the present vehicle speed and a value that accords with the deviation.

13. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the vehicle speed acceleration unit increases is configured to increase the vehicle speed by increasing the engine output after decreasing the braking force.

14. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the vehicle speed deceleration unit decreases is configured to decrease the vehicle speed by increasing the braking force after decreasing the engine output.

15. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 14, wherein the vehicle speed deceleration unit decreases is configured to decrease the vehicle speed by decreasing the engine output, and following this, increasing a gear ratio of a transmission.

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

16. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the vehicle speed acceleration unit ~~increases~~ is configured to increase the vehicle speed by at least one of ~~setting~~ being configured to set a second engine control amount with which the engine output is controlled by the engine output control unit as the sum of the engine control amount and an engine control increase amount, and ~~setting~~ being configured to set a second brake control amount with which the braking force is controlled by the braking force control unit as the brake control amount minus a brake decrease amount.

17. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the vehicle speed deceleration unit ~~decreases~~ is configured to decrease the vehicle speed by at least one of ~~setting~~ being configured to set a second brake control amount with which the braking force is controlled by the braking force control unit as the sum of the brake control amount and a brake control increase amount, and ~~setting~~ being configured to set a second engine control amount with which the engine output is controlled by the engine output control unit as the engine control amount minus an engine decrease amount.

18. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 16, wherein the creep drive control device is configured to respectively set the engine control increase amount and the brake control increase amount are respectively set in accordance with a deviation between the vehicle speed and the target creep speed.

19. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 18, wherein the creep drive control device is configured to respectively correct the engine control increase

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

amount and the brake control increase amount are respectively corrected in accordance with at least one of a driving state of the vehicle, a road surface condition, and a driving operation of the driver.

20. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 16, wherein the creep drive control device is configured to set the brake decrease amount is set by correcting an amount that accords with a deviation between the braking force that accords with the brake control amount and a braking force that accords with a brake operation amount, using at least one of an accelerator opening and a road surface coefficient of friction.

21. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 17, wherein the creep drive control device is configured to set the engine decrease amount is set by correcting an amount that accords with a deviation between the vehicle speed and the target creep speed, using at least one of a brake operation amount and a road surface coefficient of friction.

22. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the vehicle speed acceleration unit limits is configured to limit the engine control amount such that the engine control amount is equal to or less than an upper limit value.

23. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 22, wherein the vehicle speed acceleration unit executes is configured to execute a correction of the upper

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

limit value in accordance with at least one of a driving state of the vehicle, a road surface condition, and a driving operation of the driver.

24. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 16, wherein the vehicle speed acceleration device ~~executes~~ is configured to execute a correction such that the engine control increase amount becomes smaller in either one of a case that the vehicle speed is a value proximate to zero, and a case that a gradient of a road surface is a downward gradient.

25. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 16, wherein the vehicle speed acceleration unit ~~executes~~ is configured to execute a correction such that the engine control increase amount becomes smaller in accordance with any one of an accelerator opening becoming smaller, a brake operation amount becoming larger, and a road surface coefficient of friction becomes smaller.

26. (Currently amended) The creep control device according to claim 22, wherein, when the vehicle speed acceleration unit is configured to limit the engine control amount is limited to being equal to or less than the upper limit value, the vehicle speed acceleration unit ~~suspends~~ is configured to suspend engine output control when the vehicle is either one of stationary and moving in a direction opposite to a direction of travel of the vehicle, and along with this, the starting assistance control unit ~~causes~~ is configured to cause the braking force control unit to generate a stop maintenance braking force for stop maintenance of the vehicle.

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

27. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 17, wherein the vehicle speed deceleration unit ~~executes~~ is configured to execute a correction such that the brake control increase amount becomes larger in accordance with any one of an accelerator opening becoming smaller, a brake operation amount becoming larger, and a road surface coefficient of friction becoming larger.

28. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 17, wherein the vehicle speed deceleration unit ~~executes~~ is configured to execute a correction such that the brake control increase amount becomes larger when a gradient of a road surface is a downward gradient.

29. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 16, wherein, when the vehicle speed increases ~~following decrease following a decrease~~ of the engine output by the vehicle speed deceleration unit, the braking force control unit ~~switches~~ is configured to switch the wheel to which the braking force is applied during a period in which the braking force is applied.

30. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 16, wherein the braking force control device is provided with a first braking unit that ~~applies~~ is configured to apply braking force to each wheel, and a second braking unit which ~~applies~~ that is configured to apply braking force to each wheel independently of the first brake unit, and when the vehicle speed increases following ~~decrease a decrease~~ of the engine output by the vehicle speed deceleration unit, the braking force control unit ~~switches~~ is configured to switch between

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

generation of the braking force by the first braking unit and generation of the braking force by the second braking unit, during a period in which the braking force is applied.

31. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the starting assistance control unit ~~causes~~is configured to cause the engine control amount to change such that the engine control amount agrees with an amount that accords with an accelerator pedal operation amount of the driver, when the creep driving mode is completed.

32. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the starting assistance control unit ~~causes~~is configured to cause the brake control amount to change such that the brake control amount agrees with an amount that accords with a brake pedal operation amount of the driver, when the creep driving mode is completed.

33. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 1, wherein the creep drive control device includes a hydraulic brake device in which a master cylinder pressure, which is generated based on operation of a brake pedal, is transmitted to wheel cylinders, and the ~~low speed control is executed~~ creep drive control device is configured to execute the control without transmitting the master cylinder pressure to the wheel cylinders.

34. (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the creep drive control device includes a hydraulic brake device in which a master cylinder pressure, which is generated based on operation of a brake pedal, is transmitted to wheel

Serial No. 10/648,805

Attorney Docket No. 14-018-RCE2

cylinders, and the ~~low-speed control is executed~~ creep drive control device is configured to execute the control without transmitting the master cylinder pressure to the wheel cylinders.

35 (Currently amended) The creep drive control device according to claim 2, wherein the ~~low-speed control is executed such that the vehicle speed becomes a value within a fixed range, an upper limit of which is~~ range with an upper limit of 10 km/h.